

May 2015

Year 1, Issue 4

# Pine Nut Land Health Project

## Quarterly Update

### BLM Project Contacts

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## Project Overview

The Sierra Front Field Office (SFFO) signed a Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact on the Pine Nut Land Health Project Environmental Assessment (EA) on April 29, 2014. The Pine Nut Land Health Project will treat approximately 24,564 acres and will be implemented over a 10 to 15 year period.

A large focus of the project is the complete removal of pinyon-juniper trees in sage-brush areas in order to maintain and/or create additional sage-grouse habitat and movement corridors. This may occur on up to

15,000 acres in areas where sage-grouse have been identified as present by recent telemetry studies. The other prescription proposed for medium and high density woodland stands (9,500 acres) is selective thinning to achieve the following goals:

- Fuel hazard reduction
- Riparian stand health and hydrologic function
- Woodland stand health and diversity
- Forest product removal as a by-product of treatments

## Partners

The actions will build upon previous fuel hazard reduction projects and expand the scope of vegetation treatments to address an entire landscape in an integrated approach. Project partners include:

- Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW)
- Great Basin Institute (GBI)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
- East Fork Fire
- Great Basin Bird Observatory
- Conservation Districts
- United States Geological Survey (USGS)
- Pinyon-juniper Partnership
- Bently Ranch

## Tribal Field Tour of the PNLH project – Save the Date!

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Sierra Front Field Office is inviting members of local tribes and project partners on field tours of vegetation treatment units within the Pine Nut Mountains. The tour will showcase previous treatments, planned riparian, sage-grouse, fuels, and woodland health treatments along the Bruinswick Canyon and Sunrise Pass roads. See flyer for more information.

When: Tuesday, May 19, 2015 and  
Thursday, May 21, 2015  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Where: Carson City District Office  
5665 Morgan Mill Road  
Carson City, NV 89701

RSVP: Lisa Ross by May 12, 2015  
775-885-6107  
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## Completed treatments and monitoring

### **Sage-grouse Treatments**

Hand removal treatments were completed on 2,210 acres of the Mill Canyon unit, 177 acres in the Illinois unit and the entire 969 acre Lyon unit (completed December 2014).

### **Woodland Health Thinning**

Roadside thinning along Sunrise Pass continued in the fall of 2015, with a total of 69 acres treated. Public can collect firewood from the treatment area. Slash piles will be burned this winter, weather permitting.

### **Monitoring**

Since 2011, USGS has been actively collaring sage-grouse to track their movement in the Pine Nut Mountain Range. This monitoring will continue for several years and will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of sage-grouse habitat enhancement treatments. Other monitoring includes vegetation response and migratory bird nesting and foraging use.



*"Our goal is to conserve habitat necessary to sustain Greater and Bi-state populations and reduce the likelihood of listing under the Endangered Species Act."*

Amy Lueders 12/5/12  
State Director  
BLM Nevada

## On the horizon

### **Sage-grouse Treatments**

Hand removal treatments will be done in the fall of 2015 on the remaining 2,412 acres of the Mill Canyon Unit. This contract is being prepared by NDOW through the Nevada Partners in Conservation Program. The priority Bald Mtn unit will be treated in the fall of 2015, using BLM fire personnel after the conclusion of fire season. An NRCS EQIP contract is being prepped for 789 acres of the Crest unit, with work commencing late summer 2015.

### **Woodland Health Thinning**

The Sunrise Pass Stewardship project (80 acres of the Illinois unit), will be treated by GBI starting in September of 2015. Roadside thinning along Sunrise Pass will continue in the fall of 2015.

### **Fuel Hazard Reduction**

Contract preparation will be done for approximately 189 acres in the Ruehenstroth Unit. Work will be started in the fall of 2015. Prep work is beginning on the 769 acre Sunrise Pass Unit, with plans of a contract award by the end of FY15.

### **Riparian Restoration**

Unit layout and contract preparation is ongoing for the El Dorado and Illinois Canyon Units. NDOW will begin treatments on these areas in the fall of 2015 on approximately 150 acres of private land and possibly 410 acres of BLM, pending funding. An NRCS EQIP contract is proposed for the Pipeline Canyon unit, acres and treatment date is yet to be determined.



Fig. 1. Mill Canyon Project After Treatment